Resolution on the situation of freedoms in Algeria

2019/2927(RSP) - 28/11/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation of freedoms in Algeria.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, Renew and ECR groups.

Parliament strongly condemned the arbitrary and unlawful arrests, detainment, intimidation and attacks on journalists, trade unionists, lawyers, students, human rights and civil society activists and all peaceful protesters taking part in the ‘Hirak’ movement, which began on 16 February 2019, ten days after the announcement of Abdelaziz Bouteflika's candidature for a fifth presidential term. The Hirak is the largest protest movement in Algeria and enjoys broad support. The demonstrators call for an end to corruption and denounce the lack of opportunities for political engagement, high unemployment rates and repression of demonstrations, and for a more pluralistic and inclusive framework to prepare for free elections, as part of the broader political transition.

Parliament called on the Algerian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all those charged for exercising their right to freedom of expression, and the other peaceful protesters, human rights defenders and journalists arbitrarily imprisoned, despite the fact that their activities are allowed under Algerian law, in line with the international human rights instruments which Algeria has ratified.

The Algerian authorities are called on to ensure judiciary independence and to:

- put an end to any form of intimidation, including judicial and legislative harassment, criminalisation, and arbitrary arrests and detention, against peaceful protesters;

- amend Act 91-19 of 2 December 1991 to remove all restrictions on peaceful demonstrations that are not absolutely necessary or proportionate;

- eliminate and prevent any form of excessive use of force by law enforcement officials while dispersing public gatherings.

Parliament also called for an end to violations of the freedom of worship of Christians, Ahmadis and other religious minorities. It called on the Algerian authorities to guarantee the full exercise of freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief to all, which is guaranteed by the Algerian Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The European External Action Service, the Commission and the Member States were invited to support civil society groups, human rights defenders, journalists and protestors, as well as to closely monitor the human rights situation in Algeria using all available instruments, including the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights.

Members called for a solution to the crisis based on a peaceful and inclusive political process.